

### R E M A R K S

Reconsideration of the present application in view of the amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested. Claims 3 and 9 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 1, 4-7, 10-12, 18, 20, 22, and 26 have been amended. Twenty-four (24) claims are pending in the application: Claims 1-2, 4-8, and 10-26.

#### Allowable subject matter

1. At the outset, Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for indicating claims 9-11 as allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants have amended the claims such that all of the pending independent claims include subject matter the Examiner has indicated as allowable. Specifically, claim 1 was amended to include the limitations from claim 9 and any intervening claims. Additionally, independent claims 18, 20, 22 and 26 have been amended to include the limitations from claim 9 and thus should also allowable. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance.

#### Drawings

2. Figures 1-6 stand objected to for not be labeled by a legend such as -Prior Art-.

Applicants have submitted herewith replacement drawings designating figures 1-6 with the legend -Prior Art- as requested by the Examiner. Thus, the objection is overcome.

App. No. 10/076,943  
Amendment A  
Page 12

Amendments to the Drawings

Please amend figures 1-6 by adding the legend "Prior Art" to each of the figures.

Attachments: Six (6) Replacement sheets

**35 U.S.C. § 103**

3. Claims 1-8 and 12-26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

While Applicants traverse these rejections, Applicants have placed the claims the Examiner indicated as "allowable subject matter" into condition for allowance in order to pursue the timely issuance of the allowable claims. Additionally, all of the pending independent claims have been amended to include limitations from claim 9. Applicants may file a continuation application to later pursue any canceled claims. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit these rejections are overcome and all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance.

C O N C L U S I O N

In view of the above, Applicants submit that the pending claims are in condition for allowance, and prompt and favorable action is earnestly solicited. Applicants have made a diligent effort to place the claims in condition for allowance. However, should there remain any outstanding issues that require adverse action, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone Thomas F. Lebens at (805) 781-2865 so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

Respectfully submitted,



Martin R. Bader  
Reg. No. 54,736

Dated: January 5, 2005

Address all correspondence to:

FITCH, EVEN, TABIN & FLANNERY  
120 South LaSalle Street, Ste. 1600  
Chicago, IL 60603  
(858) 552-1311